

## **20 Things to Use as Rewards for Children**

Have you struggled to find the perfect reward system for your household. Do you want to avoid food prized, but have children turned who aren't interested in stickers? Rewards can be tricky, and you might find your best success mixing and matching various ideas to suit the occasion and mood of your children that day. A variety is also a good idea for children of different ages on the same discipline or reward system.

### **Candy**

The classic reward, candy is popular with many parents simply because it is so popular with children. A few M&Ms or Skittles is enough to get a child on the potty or finished with cleaning – and they are cheap, too.

### **Stickers**

Stickers used for the sake of stickers are much like candy. Kids like to stick them on their favorite toys, their walls, their door, their siblings, your furniture and anywhere else they can. Fortunately it's easy to instruct kids on how to use stickers appropriately, but they make for a nice, tidy reward – especially if you have your child's favorite character.

### **Sticker Charts**

More complicated than stickers handed to children, the sticker chart is a collection of boxes that are filled with stickers as your child does something correctly. He makes his bed in the morning, he gets a sticker. He clears his plate away, he gets a sticker. When the stickers reach a certain point, he gets a larger prize – perhaps a toy or larger candy item. You can make sticker charts more elaborate as well by interspersing certain rewards so that there are “surprises” along the way.

### **Time**

Time is a huge privilege to parents, but time after what is normally bedtime is a great reward for children. If your child does what he is supposed to do, he might earn five or ten more minutes after bedtime. The amount doesn't have to be large, in fact, often the best reward is to be the one allowed to stay up when siblings are sent off to bed.

### **Shows**

Television is a nice reward as well – especially at the end of the day as it is so mindless. If your child is due a reward, let him stay up late to watch his favorite show. A twenty-five minute children's show won't ruin bedtime, and it gives you time to cuddle a bit before bedtime.

### **Stories**

Children love to be read to, and you can use the number of stories you'll read together as an incentive or reward. You might bump the number of stories to three if he is well behaved or knock it down to one. Try to always leave at least one story, however as reading to your child is so beneficial.

### **Minutes**

If you're a parent who uses an egg timer in the evening, you've likely set it for a certain number of minutes in the evening that you'll be staying in your child's room to help him fall asleep. Adding minutes to the timer is a great way to offer him a reward, and it lets you watch your little one fall asleep – just try to stay awake yourself.

### **Bubbles**

The tiny containers of bubbles that are used in weddings and other goody bags from parties are excellent rewards for children. They love to blow bubbles, and the containers are small enough that you can allow them to do the bubble-blowing inside the house if you'd like, or you can take the fun outside. Even young toddlers can figure out how to dip and blow these little bubbles.

### **Treasure Chest**

At a junk or party store, buy a large bag of party favors and toys – colorful pencils, bouncing balls and all of the other goodies kids love to play with for a few minutes before they break or get lost. Then, when your child has earned the privilege, let him select something from the treasure chest.

### **Time Online**

For older children, a nice reward is additional time online. Your child might earn an extra thirty minutes of free internet time in the evening by taking care of his homework in the way you asked him.

### **Video or Computer Games**

If you normally have a set time for video games, breaking that rule for a special reward is very sweet indeed. Allow your older child to play the games for an hour before dinner or set your preschooler up on the computer with his favorite cartoon characters and their games as a nice reward.

### **Special Trip**

Often being allowed to do something special is its own reward. If your child is in need of a special treat, allow him to go with you on a special errand. For example, going to get take-out from an eclectic restaurant is often its own reward for children interested in getting a set of chopsticks or other souvenir.

## **A Special Destination**

If your child keeps up a certain behavior long enough, you can reward him with a trip somewhere special. For example, your older child might be desperate to go to a particular festival with her friends over the weekend. She can “earn” the privilege by taking care of her chores plus a few others that need doing around the house.

## **Baked Goods**

While candy is a simple reward, a sweet that you create especially for a child has terrific meaning. As a nice reward for a job well done on a school progress report or special competition, you might bake a cake or make brownies. Be sure to decorate them accordingly with your child’s name and achievement and take plenty of pictures.

## **The Day Off**

Your child’s life is likely just as hectic as yours with matches to make and school to finish up. A great reward just for being special is to surprise your child with a day off. Pick her up from school early and jet off somewhere special for the afternoon. Even getting out of school an hour early is a special treat if you’re uncomfortable with your child missing a full day or can’t take a full day off yourself.

## **Extra Responsibilities**

Children often thrive on extra responsibilities. For example, if your child is hoping to take home the class fish or bunny over the break, be sure she realizes that taking care of the animal is a great deal of responsibility and she needs to earn the privilege. She’ll likely rise to the occasion and be completely thrilled to shake in a few fish flakes over a long weekend.

## **The Desired Item**

If your child has had her eye on something for quite a while, you can always use it as either a bribe or as a reward for a job already completed. The new video game can sit in a special place while your child works hard to complete a special assignment or goes through the chore of make-up work after being out for a time. When the job is done, he gets the prize.

## **Friends**

Children of all ages enjoy their friends, and the company of a friend can be used as a reward for certain things. If your child takes care of her chores during the week, she can invite a friend to spend the night on Friday or invite a friend over for Saturday afternoon. While this can be a special bonus, don’t tie friendship to too strenuous of a chore or your child might get frustrated and you’ll find yourself in an awkward situation of being unable to follow through with your original plan.

## **Grandparent Sleep Over**

If your extended family lives nearby, you can use them as a means to reward your children. It's a nice reward for many grandparents as well. Be sure it's okay with the grandparents before letting your child know that his chores are tied to a trip to spend the night with Granny on Friday. This will likely be extremely motivating.

### **Captain for the Day**

Another system that works well with primary age children is to allow them to be in charge of the evening or day. The meals will include their favorite dishes and the family will all play the games or do the activities suggested by the "captain." This might mean eating jelly sandwiches and watching movies all night, but it certainly is a nice treat for the one who is usually told what to do by others.